

## [Mrs. J. C. Fountain]

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Life History FOLKLORE —White Pioneer

Miss Effie Cowan, P. W.

McLennan County, Texas.

District No. 8

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Interview with Mrs. J. C. Fountain, White Pioneer, Merlin, Texas.

"I was born March 27, 1873, at Pineville, Alabama. My parents were W. D. and Mary Katherine Kyser, who came to Texas in 1875. I was reared in Merlin and attended the public schools of Marlin and a college for young ladies at Winston Salem, North Carolina.

"On December 20, 1893, I married Mr. James C. Fountain, Jr., who was born in the vicinity of Reagan, Texas, on October 21, 1871, and is the son of Thomas G. Fountain, who became a citizen of Texas about the year 1869. He was a descendent of Dossey Fountain of South Carolina, of Scotch ancestry. Mr. Thomas Fountain was a native Southerner, was born at Sparta, Alabama, in 1839 and spent his youth on a plantation which was tilled by slave labor.

"When the war between the States came on he joined the Confederate Cavalry and with his brother Henry was enlisted in the cause of the South until the end of the conflict. He

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enlisted in 1861 at Pineville, Alabama, in Company F, Fifty-third Cavalry, and was first placed in General Forrest's command. After the battle of Luke, the regiment was ordered to Northern Alabama, where it joined the army under Gen. Roddy and remained with it until transferred to the command of General Wheeler a few months later. Mr. Fountain fought in the battle of Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, the defense of Atlanta, the campaign against the advance of General Sherman's army, following him through South Carolina. 2 "The last battle that Mr. Fountain fought in was at Statesburg, and he lay down his arms at Columbia, South Carolina. He then resumed the life of a farmer and began the labor of rebuilding the family estate. This was done under the greatest difficulties for the trying days of reconstruction came on and when he came to Texas in 1869 he had made small progress toward financial independence. He came by rail to Falls County and settled in the Hog Island community near Reagan with a wife and three children and seventy-five cents in money. For some years he was a tenant on rented land but prosperity finally came his way until he was enabled to move to Reagan, where he engaged in the lumber business and bought a farm nearby.

"He was named for tax collector and filled this office four years. His educational advantages included the public schools of Marlin and a year in College at Lebanon, Ohio and a course in Eastman's Business College at Poughkeepsie, New York. His first experience in banking business was with the Citizens National Bank at Waco, Texas and after a year and a half there he was transferred to the First National Bank at Marlin, as bookkeeper. He served in this capacity until 1907 having entered this place of business in 1892, and having been elevated from bookkeeper to cashier. After having served this time in the bank he was elected city treasurer of Marlin and served in this capacity for twelve years. At the time of his death he was acting as receiver of the Merchants National Bank of Brownsville, Texas, and died November 25, 1934.

"To my father and mother were born six children, namely; Alva, Ernest, Jasper C., Jr., Lula Lee, Ruth and Leah, twin sisters and the youngest in the family. The oldest married Mrs. R. E. Beard, is now manager of Cox Dry Goods Co., at Marlin. Ernest married Vera

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Wiley and is in business 3 in Marlin. Jasper Jr., married Pearl Paul and lives at Mart, he is manager of the Texas Utilities Company. Lula Lee married J. Frank Cheavens, a Baptist minister of Victoria, Texas. Ruth married James F. Patrick and lives in Dallas. Leah married James Parrish and lives at Marlin.

"I have resided at the old home since our marriage and one of my daughters, Mrs. Parrish is living with me."